

**Reflections on the development of  
the Treasure Beach Destination  
Management Organisation (DMO)  
from a cluster development project**

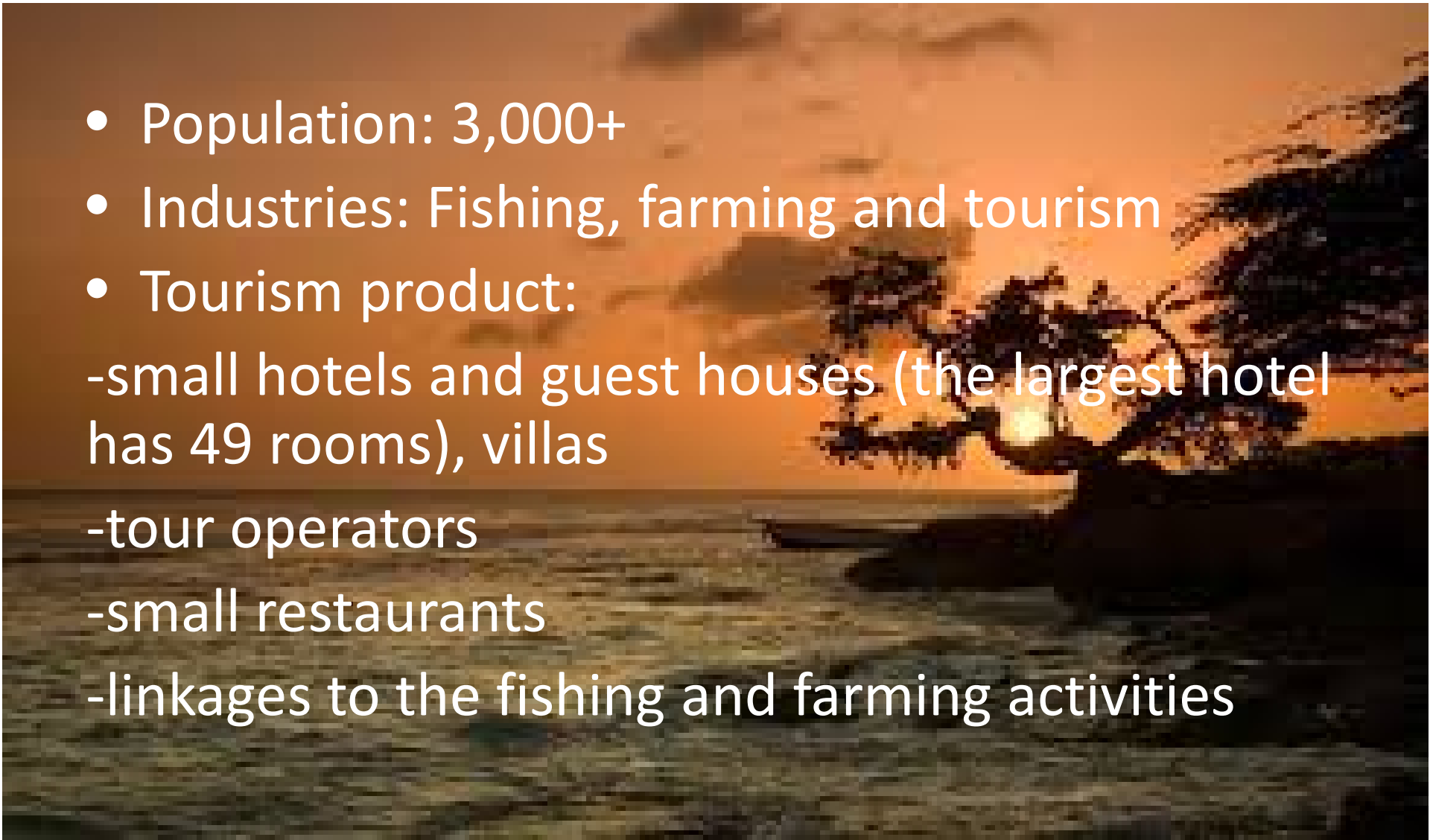
Christine Marrett, November 2017

# Treasure Beach



# Treasure Beach

- Population: 3,000+
- Industries: Fishing, farming and tourism
- Tourism product:
  - small hotels and guest houses (the largest hotel has 49 rooms), villas
  - tour operators
  - small restaurants
  - linkages to the fishing and farming activities



# Community tourism

“Interaction between the host community and visitor which leads to the sharing and enjoyment of community experiences products and services”, providing “tourists with a personal, interactive connection with local community members that enhances their understanding of cultural differences... For the communities themselves, it is an opportunity to interpret their culture to an appreciative audience, foster pride in their community, and diversify their economies.”

Government of Jamaica. Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment (2014). Green Paper No. 2/14 *Towards a national community tourism policy and strategy*. Kingston: Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment.

# Treasure Beach-home of community tourism in Jamaica

- 1978 community tourism articulated by Desmond Henry, a son of Treasure Beach. A way of spreading the benefits of tourism to communities off the beach.
- Treasure Beach named the 'Best Resort Town Experience' in the RJR/Gleaner Hospitality Jamaica Awards, November 2017.
- Best Resort Town Experience was created to highlight resort towns that excel at exposing their visitors to indigenous, adventurous, and cultural experiences while providing a clean and harassment-free environment.



# Community organisations in Treasure Beach

- 1980s: Treasure Beach Citizen's Association: a broad-based, participatory organisation, incorporating "all those districts served by the Treasure Beach Post Office". National attention to its needs for improved roads, electricity, water and telephones.
- 1998: **Treasure Beach Breds Foundation**: projects and programmes to enhance education, vocational training, recreation and livelihood and to ensure sustainability of the environment.



- Treasure Beach Sports Park; Galleon Fish Sanctuary (located some 35 km to the east of Treasure Beach)



- 2000: **Treasure Beach Women's Group (TBWG) Benevolent Society**: promotes the advancement of women and the Treasure Beach community as a whole, through education, income producing projects, and awareness of women's health and women's issues.



- Craft shop; Coordinates annual free health clinic and International Coastal Clean-up day activities.



- 2005: **Citizens Alert Group**: focus on infrastructure and security.

# Tradition of collaboration

- 2012: Treasure Beach adjudged the winner of the National BEST (Better Environments for Social Transformation) Community Competition and Programme.
- Combined efforts of the three organisations: Breds, TBWG and the Citizens Alert Group of Treasure Beach.
- The BEST Community and Programme was launched in 2006 to encourage the development of sustainable communities through their involvement in a variety of activities that promote local governance, self-help, and self-reliance.
- 2012 was the third year of Treasure Beach entering the competition.
- Cash prize of Ja\$2 million awarded.
- Used for developments within the community, including beautification projects.



# Cluster development project

“Local Economic Development in Treasure Beach” submitted in 2013 by Breds to Inter-American Development Bank’s (IDB’s) Cluster Development Programs (CDPs).

CDPs promote the formation of economic or industrial or business clusters. In the Caribbean, the CDPs have been channelled through the **Compete Caribbean** Partnership Facility (CCPF) based in Barbados.



# Local Economic Development in Treasure Beach

- Aim: support the Treasure Beach community “to develop the tourism potential of the area and develop and market a unique brand of tourism for Treasure Beach” (Plan of operations).
- Started: March 2014. Ended October 2016. Originally projected to be completed in two phases over 19 months (7 and 12 months respectively).

# Local Economic Development in Treasure Beach (continued)

- Phase 1: establish a functioning cluster, with defined objectives, targets, roles and responsibilities
- Phase II: provide improved or new product offerings or packages which would be based on market intelligence data, and the Treasure Beach brand identity which would then drive marketing activities and improve the visibility of Treasure Beach as a destination.

## Local Economic Development in Treasure Beach

- **Consultancies undertaken:**

1. Consultancy to Define the Treasure Beach Product & Provide Baseline Assessments of the Product & Asset Inventory
2. Consultancy to Implement Market Ready Standards
3. Treasure Beach Destination Management and Marketing Organization Business and Marketing Plan
4. Establishment of a Destination Management Organization for Treasure Beach, Jamaica
5. Treasure Beach Tourism Market Segments Assessment
6. Consultancy to Implement Branding Strategy for Treasure Beach Cluster in Jamaica
7. Building a Treasure Beach based website

# Local Economic Development in Treasure Beach

- **Project successes**

- (i) increased the number of small businesses that became or were in the process of becoming compliant with Jamaica's government standards for tourism industry enterprises
- (ii) spurred the emergence of the new category of Home Stay through interactions with the Tourism Product Development Company
- (iii) developed or refined ten authentic, people based experiences best suited for the type of traveller likely to visit Treasure Beach
- (iv) developed the Treasure Beach "you are born here" brand
- (v) established of the Destination Management Organisation to manage the Treasure Beach brand and execute the marketing strategy
- (vi) motivated closer working relationships between the cluster and the relevant public sector entities, which gave rise to results such as a revolving loan fund and other financing option and the commitment from the local government for road improvements and ongoing support for community tourism.
- (v) **Treasure Beach Destination Management Organisation (DMO) Limited** registered in October 2017, one year after completion of the project.



# Local Economic Development in Treasure Beach

- **Challenges**

- (i) Electronic participation in meetings for those not physically present in Treasure Beach.
- (ii) Formation of the cluster delayed until participants provided with details of the project.
- (iii) Web-site not yet launched, still being finessed.
- (iv) Digesting the information provided by the consultancies.
- (v) Human resource availability.
- (vi) Sustained financing for the Treasure Beach Destination Management Organisation.

# The lessons learned

- (i) Community tourism thrives in a culture of collaboration
- (ii) Building on the tradition of collaboration facilitated the institutional arrangements for the cluster
- (iii) The cluster can harness the collective energy of the community
- (iv) Information and data are important bases on which to build
- (v) Leadership is critical